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PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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IDEAL CHRISTIANITY.

I propose to speak to you, this evening, from the passage which I read as the opening service, contained in the first chapter of the second Epistle general of Peter ; and to derive from this the apostolic conception of the Christian character, and so of the nature of Christianity itself, about which there is in our time so much discussion and so much uncertainty.

“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus, our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

When you think of the way in which men are often preached to ; how they are pressed to go through a certain line of narrow experience ; to come under conviction, and then to experience conversion, and then to join the church, and then to get along the best way they can ; when you look at the exhortations which are made, and the cautions which are given, and the fears which are excited, and the guards which are set up, and the restrictions which are laid down, how poor and mean a thing is religion ! If one be born with a goodly organization, with excellent health and with great strength, I do not wonder that oftentimes he looks upon the representations which are made by feeble men to feeble men almost with scorn, and certainly with a contemptuous rejection. Men are bound, restriction upon restriction being put upon them, one indulgence after another indulgence being denied them, and one pleasant thing after another pleasant thing being stripped off and taken away from them. It would seem

as though, instead of the free exercise of thought, or the unrestrained following of the inspiration of the nobler feelings, men were called to keep Sundays, and every day to read their Bibles, every day to say their prayers, and every day *not* to do this, and *not* to do that, and *not* to do the other thing, until, like the Ten Commandments, they were all *nots* and *nots* and *nots*—and this, with the expectation that if they maintained under priestly direction all these various negatives through to the end of life, hard as the undertaking is, and barren as it is of any considerable enjoyment to most people, they would be paid up for it at last by being permitted to go to heaven, and get there, in over-measure, what they did not get upon earth. A pretty dreary time men have, being in the church, and trying not to do wrong, and denying themselves a thousand pleasant things which other people have; but then, when they die, they expect to go to heaven, and be happy, and get their pay in over-measure for what they lose here.

Now, hear the Apostle Peter—that bold and noble apostle—calling men to glory and to virtue, and setting before them no instrumentalities, no routine whatsoever of church life or church conduct, but this: “That ye might be partakers of the divine nature.” It is as if he had said, “I call you all into divine freedom and fullness; I call you to a complete enjoyment of being; to plenary will; to more glorious inspirations; to more thought and feeling; to a larger life; to a fuller liberty; I call you from barrenness to abundance; from bondage to freedom; from self, which is narrowing and confining and cheating in its ultimate remunerations, to a pattern of life, to a conception of manhood, which shall have in it the fullness of joy in the present, and hope for the future—faith and fruition united.”

The conception of the aim of life as making a churchman of a man, and the apostolic conception as making a *man* out of a man, are very different. The churchman is made up of obedience to rules and regulations and conventions and instrumentalities. There are so many things to be done on so many days; there are so many things to be avoided on such and such occasions; and these things constitute a *retinue*, a *reticulation* of minor, subordinate, material

observances. But the apostolic conception of becoming a Christian is a transcendently larger way of living than you have been accustomed to—a redemption from the power of those lusts which are the torment of men's lives, and which are the reason of so much unhappiness, so much fear, so much complication, so much waste, so much acute sorrowing memory, so much remorse. By the power of the Holy Ghost, by the transcendent influence of the Divine Spirit, resting upon the souls of men, they receive power to be set free from lusts, which are the foundations of the evils which are in the world. And by this same divine inspiration or knowledge of God through Jesus Christ, they are to aspire to a partnership in the divine nature. The words of the apostle are these :

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

Such is the apostolic conception.

Now the apostle proceeds to a general and most significant exposition of this idea of Christian manhood. He gives some substantial elements of it. And I beg you to take notice that, when he is writing to the Christian believers—to those who are through him to receive their knowledge—he does not say a single word as to when they shall pray, how they shall pray, whether they shall write their prayers, whether somebody shall pray for them, whether they shall go to meeting, or whether they shall attend church. He says not one word about the external harness. He strikes at the central element—that which is the constituent of essential manhood—leaving the form to take care of itself; leaving men to frame it to suit themselves; leaving the whole apparatus, all educatory instrumentalities, untouched. He strikes at that which goes to make up the foundation element of a true manly life.

Our version says :

“And besides this [which does not convey the true meaning: especially this, would be a better translation], giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue.”

To faith, which is pre-supposed as a condition of reciprocity,—the mind being open to the divine existence, to the spiritual character, and to the realities of the invisible and

the eternal—to this, is to be added virtue—the whole round of things which are esteemed excellent, whether they be higher or lower; moralities; whatsoever is justly esteemed among men. Whatsoever is beautiful and dignified and right—this is to be added to your virtue, and to your faith.

“And to virtue, knowledge.”

What is meant is not that knowledge which is obtained through books, but that knowledge which comes from practical life; which springs from the absolute exercise of one's moral sense; which is gathered in the conflicts of life; which proceeds from the intercourse of man with man; which arises from those processes which we designate in a larger way as “experiences;” which the soul acquires by campaigning; by which a man becomes a veteran; and for which there is almost no word. It does not exclude the more modern forms of knowledge; neither does it exclude ideas; nor does it exclude facts; but it significantly points to that kind of knowledge which is vital and personal, and which belongs to a man as his own achievement.

“And to knowledge, temperance.”

So says our version. The original word might be more properly translated *self-control*. *Temperance* has become narrowed and specialized, particularly in our land. We mean by it, not exactly temperance, but abstinence. At any rate, the word does not convey at all the full force of the original. That signifies, rather, the right handling of one's soul—that kind of self-control by which every part of a man's nature has a chance to act normally. For self-control is not, in the main, suppression. Self-government does not necessarily mean putting down. It implies such an ordering of one's self that each element of a man's nature shall have a fair opportunity for suitable development and exercise. If there be any tumultuous passion that rises in undue strength, and would take possession of the whole economy, it is to be put down enough to let the other faculties unfold as they were by nature designed to unfold.

It would be unfair for a man to take a thirty-two-foot pipe, with all thunder in it, and play it here, and make it drown every other part of this instrument. The art of play-

ing the organ consists in securing such a combination of stops, and such a tempering of the strong, intermediate, soft and weak tones, that every part shall have justice done to it.

Self-government does not mean slaughter, except metaphorically. We are not to crucify anything that has been created in us. There is no one appetite or passion or faculty or power of the whole make-up of a man that is not necessary to his being. What we want, therefore, is to temper together the various elements of our constitution so that they shall stand in their ranks, affiliations, and co-operations, those which are very strong being kept down, and those which are yet weak being stimulated and brought up. We are to add temperance or self-government—that is, the right management of everything that is in us—to knowledge.

Well, when you have added that to knowledge and virtue and faith, you have added a great deal. It is said that if a man governs his tongue he is a perfect man. It used to be so hard to do it that a man who could do it was thought to be capable of doing anything. A man who is naturally dumb, and governs his tongue, is no better for it; a man who does not want to talk may govern his tongue, and it will be no great sign of virtue in him; but for a person who is alive with curiosity, who is intensely desirous of hearing everything that is said or can be said; who, by reason of various inflammatory emotions, is excessively garrulous—for such a person to govern his tongue is to govern a great deal that is back of it.

Now, if a man can govern his temper, his passions of every kind, all his emotions; if he can add this temperance, or self-control, to knowledge, as that is added to virtue, and as that is added to faith, then certainly he is a great distance on the way toward a Christian education.

“And to temperance [or self-control], patience.”

Ah! it is getting harder and harder. A man may, perhaps, for a little while, by a good deal of effort, hold on, keep down, push up; but to continue to do it day by day and not get weary, to undergo perpetual provocation and not give out, is not an easy thing. One can bear pain of body for a little while, but continuous pain exhausts patience and

overreaches courage. And so in regard to a man's emotion, or in regard to that discipline of Providence in which he is placed, to hold one's self calmly balanced, well-ordered, rightly governed, even for a day, is no small matter. On so balmy a day as this glorious Sunday has been, with the heavens propitious, with the earth beautiful, with God intermingled with all things that the eye delights to look upon, or that the ear delights to listen to—on such a day as this, one might walk in peace; but who shall hold the man in the same mood to-morrow, and the next day, and the next, patient, so as that the provocations, and agitations, and swellings, and surgings, and oscillations which come from men busy in life shall not be able to shake him from the steadfast purpose of self-government?

“And to patience [when you have it] godliness.”

Do not be content to maintain yourself in a beggarly equilibrium, partly by the support of your household, partly by the support of those around you, bolstering yourself up, as it were, by your own affairs, so that men shall see that you are living a quiet, upright, temperate, self-governed life, and look upon it as a beautiful morality: nay, let there be prayer, devotion, spirituality, godliness, so that this shall not be a mere secular experience, but an experience manifestly reaching up to and taking hold of the sublimest realities of the other life.

Well, is not adding godliness enough? If a man is godly is not that sufficient? No. I have seen a great many godly men who lacked many things that are desirable. I have seen very godly men who did not take any notice of children. I have seen men who were so godly that they had very little sympathy with men: they sympathized with God pretty much altogether. I have seen men who were so godly that they lived in the thought of the divine government, and the divine justice, and the divine nature, and were forever talking of God, and of his kingdom and of his realm, and were forever praying to him, and had no thought for their fellow-creatures.

So, then, we are to add to our patience godliness, and to godliness—what do you think?

“And to godliness, brotherly kindness [sympathy of man with man].”

Come out of your closet as Moses came down from the mountain—with his face shining, though he did not know it himself. Come with all your inward control, your aspiration, your devoutness, your fervor, your knowledge, your faith. Come with all the Christian elements which we have thus far enumerated. Do not act as if you were better than other people, or lifted above them. You may be one of God’s aristocrats; but that is no reason why you should hold your head up among men and walk superior to them. Add to your other virtues that sweet brotherly sympathy which shall unite you to all those who are around about you.

Well, is not that enough? No; because men may say, “I thank God that I was converted in the Methodist church; I do love the Methodist brethren;” or men may say, “I never hear the name of Plymouth church that my love does not go out toward the brethren of that church.” There is sympathy between you and those of your own church, and that is all right. Churchmen like churchmen; Roman Catholics like Roman Catholics—that is, under certain circumstances. So men have friendliness and fellowship toward their own kind. And as if they were in danger of narrowing their intercourse and regard, and leaving it in this form, the apostle adds a larger designation which you cannot escape—which takes in everybody:

“And to brotherly kindness, love.”

Love is the crowning virtue. It embraces every human being not only, but every sentient or sensitive thing; it is the essential element of God. It is in love that we become partakers of the divine nature, if anywhere; for no man can become a partaker of the divine nature in this world in the matter of infinite power, nor of intuitive and certain wisdom, nor of those profound and mysterious depths of excellence which are unrevealed and unrevealable. God is love; he that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him; and it is at this point that we fail. It is at this point that virtue, self-control, godliness, sweet fellowship, all the various roots of Christian character, finally come together. It is at this point

of universal love that the apostle terminates the description.

We are not called to church membership; we are not called to the renunciation of this, that, or the other thing: we are called to the nobility of a transcendent character; we are called to strength and manliness; we are called to whatever is large and grand in human nature.

Therefore, let me say, in regard to what Christianity is, that it is the ideal of a certain condition of mankind. It is God's purpose, made manifest through the Lord Jesus Christ, to evolve from the human race a divine character. There are certain externalities of Christianity; there is a historical line of antecedents; but the essential thing in Christianity is that it is the divine plan by which men are to be lifted from the lowest animalism, and unfolded into the grandeur of spiritual beings, and to become partakers of the divine nature.

Therefore, Christianity is not simply a schedule of doctrines, any more than plows and harrows and rakes and spades are harvests. They are not grain nor corn, though they may be precedent to grain and corn. They are indispensable to the production of these things; but they are not the things themselves: they are the mere instruments by which, in one way or another, such results are worked out and elaborated.

Now, the essential element of Christianity is the elevation of the human nature into the divine, or the lapse, the descent, of the divine nature into the human, for the purpose of the exaltation of the human. Whatsoever things come up in this age, that are of moment to men, are, whether they were known by men eighteen hundred years ago or not, part and parcel of Christianity. Christianity is a thing which cannot be written in a book. It cannot be put into language nor inventoried. No man can write the history of a single human soul. We have histories, but what are they? Do you suppose that any man by saying "love" expresses love? Does a guide-board which stands at the forks of a road, and says, "Forty miles," contain the forty miles? Is not the guide-board a mere symbol, or hint, of a fact? And when

God speaks by the words of the Bible, the things of which he speaks are not in that Bible; they are not on paper. When he utters facts concerning men, those facts exist, not in the record, but in the actual lives of individuals.

Hence, Christianity cannot be compressed into a little creed. A creed may point to things which are extremely useful; but the things themselves cannot be put into a creed. The Bible—the Old Testament and the New—is a combination of *indices*. Its words are but symbols; it is a history; it is a collection of commands; it is an indication of certain traits; but the divine, glorious, loving spirit, kindling in the human soul a corresponding loving spirit; the subjugation of the whole interior man to the lines and limitations of the divine; the awakening in the human soul of aspiration, enthusiasm, courage, faith, hope; the leading that soul to renounce all lust; the producing therein friendliness and sympathy and love—can printer's ink do more than hint at these things? They are made up of throbbing souls. They spring in vital forms out of the very spirit of man.

So, not only is Christianity a spiritual condition of living souls, but it is *inrescent*. It cannot be expressed once for all. Many people say, "Will there never be anything like stability of doctrine?" I hope not. I should be sorry if the world should come to a pause in such a sense as that you could express now all that man is ever to be, or that experience ever is to unfold either in the individual or in the race. As I understand the divine economy, there are to be great riches of knowledge yet. There are to be better social combinations. There is to be a better beginning given to every generation of men. By-and-by, when God's laws are better understood, men will be better born—that is, they will be born in better households and in better communities, and will be inspired by nobler knowledges and educating influences; and there will be experiences such as are not possible now. We see that we stand better than our fathers did, and that they stood better than their fathers did. We see that there are influences working toward a glorious millennial day, no matter what falls out between.

If a man evolves a new science in society, and claims that it is better than anything that has preceded it, and it proves to be better, he is apt to turn and say, "Where are your priests now? Where are your churches? Where is your theology? Here is something that your religion never brought out." No, our religion never brought it out; but it belongs to our religion, notwithstanding; because Christianity means, not just so much as is in a book, not just so much as has been unfolded, but all possibilities. Whatever combinations can take place under better conditions, under nobler inspirations—all these belong to the idea of Christianity, according to the declaration of the apostle Paul in an almost parallel passage :

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Christianity is universal. It is illimitable. It is not simply what has been gained in the past; it is not simply the excogitations of the present; it is not simply that which belongs to the churches; it is inclusive of all that is to come. It is not a close corporation. It is not confined to Christian organizations. It is not confined to the narrow limits of human creeds. Books cannot contain it. It belongs to the great realm of ever-changing experience. It is a living state. Therefore it is to take in the ends of the earth, the fullness of time, and the grandeur of the race. It is not narrowed down to mere technicalities, or instrumentalities, or philosophies, or any of the arrangements which belong to the lower forms of spiritual development.

Consider, now, further, the view of the apostle.

"Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things [if you pursue this line, seeking after and attaining the amplitude and the combination of these qualities], ye shall never fall [neither now nor hereafter]; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

That is a verse as bold as it very well can be in our translation, and as magnificent as poet can imagine in the original, where the verb which is translated *an abundant entrance shall*

be ministered unto you is a word derived from the practice of receiving conquerors by pouring out processions with banded music from the cities, to meet them as they approach to enter in.

If you pursue this high perception of life in Jesus Christ, seeking for the divine nature in the respects which are enumerated here, and in other respects which are not here mentioned, it will not be in vain; for at death you shall not go out like a bubble. It shall not be in vain when you pass from this material realm, and approach the other life, if you have with patience and perseverance pursued these things. When you draw near to the other side, not having been barren nor unfruitful in these things, but having given energy and enthusiasm and power to this exalted sense of character, this conception of Christ in you the hope of glory, transforming reason, and moral sense, and the social affections, and over-ruling the lusts and appetites—if thus you have been abundant and fruitful, then, when you die, no matter what the circumstances of your death may be, you will die gloriously.

As from the weary war, with torn and tattered clothes the conqueror comes back bearing on his person and habiliments something of every soil which he has traversed; as worn and tanned and wrinkled, he marches out from some forest, and all the thoroughfare is thronged, and he sees banners flying in the distance, and hears sounds rising, and growing nearer and more distinct; as at length couriers rush forth to meet him, and the magistrates come out, and then his own friends and household and neighbors, and then all the chief citizens and dignitaries, and finally he is caught up in a whirl of enthusiasm, and swept in, while banners are waving, and bands are playing, and crowds are shouting; so, the apostle says they who give their souls to the exemplification of this conception of Christian manhood shall have ministered unto them an exceeding abundant entrance into the kingdom of God.

It will make a great deal of difference in heaven how you live here. If you live penuriously here, you may limp into heaven like a pauper—and that will be a great deal better

than going to hell. You may escape so as by fire. As men rush out from a burning house, not able even to seize their raiment, or take any property with them, so some men may go out of this world unclad, and get into heaven. But if you live according to the spirit, the genius, the intent, of Christ and his apostles; if you have a sense of the grandeur and manliness which there is in a Christian life, and give force and enthusiasm to it, and fill it out; then when you come to the other life you shall have no doubtful, no single-handed, no mean entrance: you shall come in crowned with triumphs, and met and greeted by long processions of those who have known you, and those whom you have known; those who have helped you, and those whom you have helped; those who carried you in their arms, and those whom you have carried in your arms; those over whose graves you have wept. All that blessed company—those that have dwelt long in heaven, and those that have lately gone there; those of high estate; thrones, principalities, dominions, powers; those of every reverend and sacred name; prophets, apostles, and martyrs; all holy men; all men that loved their kind; all patriots, philanthropists, good men—shall joyously throng to behold the new comers, and you among them, crowned, not with gold, but with that which is better, royalty of heart; and then you shall enter in to be forever with the Lord, the strife at last being over, and the blossoming time having come.

I shall this week plant seeds that I shall not see blossom this summer. They must go over, and lie still through the winter. Next summer they will come to themselves, and blossom.

We are in this life biennials. The first summer we spend in this world, and the second in the other. And when we shall rise into that other life, and come to the fullness of ourselves, to the beauty and power and glory of holiness, to the transcendent wealth and amplitude of love, to the grandeur and dignity that lie in the possibilities of human nature—oh, then, with what triumph shall we look upon all the danger of the way! With what pity shall we smile at ourselves, to think at what things we cried, and what things we called burdens and self-denials!

A man takes down from the garret a cradle, and says to himself, "In that you once lay;" and he laughs, and imagines himself crying because he is hungry, and being taken up by the nurse, and fed. He cannot realize that he was ever in a state of infancy, and that he has unfolded so much.

So, when, from the other life, in its power and glory, you look back to the conditions of this life, you will pity yourselves that you were ever in such a low estate; but the grandeur of the outcome will a thousand times repay you for all the strife and struggle that you have gone through.

I call you, young men and young women, to a Christian life. I call you not to join a church—a church is a mere school-house, whose educating influences may help you or not, according as you use it; but I call you to something grander than joining a church: I call you to join God; to become partakers of the divine nature; to unite yourselves to all that is glorious in universal being. I call you to the utmost stretch of development, to largeness, to liberty, to strength, to all that is magnificent in the possible conception of manhood. I call you to take it easily if you can take it easily; or, I call you to take it with tears if you can take it only so. If the way is strait and narrow to you, nevertheless tread it: it is worth your while. If it be difficult, nevertheless tread it, and come to that which is true, that which is pure, that which is courageous, full of faith, full of self-government, and full of joy, springing out of right living. I call you to an inward life. I call you to virtue. I call you to glory and immortality.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

THOU hast drawn near to us, our Father, and thou hast called us by endearing names that our heart knows right well; or else why should we desire thee and yearn for thee? When we lift our thoughts and our affections to thee we know that thou hast been calling us, and we rejoice to think that we are needed by thee—not needed by thy power, not needed by thy glory, but needed by thy love. Having loved thine own, thou dost love them unto the end. Thou hast not forgotten, and never dost forget, those toward whom thou hast expended thy thoughts of mercy and grace. And now, O Lord our Saviour, we desire, looking upon thee, to discern what we should be. We would take no ignoble conception of life, and character, and duty. We desire to be conformed to thy glorious image. We desire to walk in the possession of those virtues which make thee illustrious in time, and glorious through eternity. Teach us the way of humility, of self-abasement, of self-denial, and of joy in suffering. Teach us how to partake of thy nature, and so become thy children, not by name, but in very spirit. Forgive us the long delays which have prevented the work of grace in our hearts; forgive our dullness, our constantly turning back, our discouragement and our weariness by the way. Forgive our imperfection, and whatever has grieved thee; and give not up the work which thou hast begun in us, and which shall be more glorious inasmuch as it is difficult. If thou shalt perfect in us the image of holiness and of God, and make us like unto thyself, and present us before the throne of thy Father, pure and spotless, how great shall be the glory of this achievement of thy grace! For thine own sake we beseech of thee forsake us not, nor give us over to doubt, or to backsliding, or to apostacy. May we have a faith that shall not fail, a virtue that shall abound more and more, and all patience, all self-denial, and self-government; and grant that we may be steadfast therein.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that by the power which we derive from thee of joy, of peace, of hope and of courage, we may not only make our own lives more radiant, but may make the lives of those around us more cheerful.

Since men are bearing heavy burdens, and are goaded with cares and many troubles from day to day, may it be ours to be messengers of peace to them. Teach us how to comfort; how to illumine; how to make men happy; how to fill the world around us with rejoicing. May we please, not ourselves, but others, for edification.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant that those who are engaged in good works, in labors among men in imitation of thee, may be strengthened with all patience and with all hopefulness. Wilt thou be pleased to grant, very speedily, to them that sow the seed, the sheaf garnered. We thank thee that there is so much encouragement to labor. We thank thee that there is between the asking and the answer so brief a space. We thank thee that those who go forth come again rejoicing so soon.

Bless all those who are engaged in making known the word of

life—in bearing the fruit of the Gospel to those who are less favored than themselves.

We beseech of thee that all the members of this church, of its schools and of its missions, may dwell in thy remembrance, and be quickened day by day, not only bearing out blessings to others, but receiving blessings themselves. May they be built up in thy faith, and established in those virtues which they seek to inculcate.

We pray for all the churches in this city, and all who labor in them. May they be united more and more perfectly in love. May all evils that offend and divide be taken away. May thy people of every name see eye to eye. May heart beat responsive to heart. And through this land take away all causes of offense. Unite thy people that there may be a power for intelligence and right-living that shall be felt throughout this great nation.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless all colleges and universities and schools, and that thou wilt bless those that teach, that intelligence may prevail everywhere, and be the forerunner of virtue and of true piety.

Let thy kingdom come in all the world. May men who have lived to destroy learn to protect and build up. May nations be dashed against each other no more. May peace and prosperity prevail the world around, that thy name may be honored and glorified on earth as it is in heaven.

Hear us in these our petitions, and answer us through the great grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, wilt thou add thy blessing to the word of exhortation and exposition. Make thy truth to shine into the inward heart of every one. Let us not stumble upon the letter nor upon the instrument. May we have the Holy Ghost—thy divine inshining—to teach our inner man, that we may have experimental knowledge of thee, and of our life in thee. May we feel that the channels between thee and our souls are not stopped. May there be an influx, a constant flow of thy life into ours. So may we live patient under trials, strong under burdens, full of faith under clouds, and ready to live, ready to die, dying in life continually to all that is evil, and living to all that is good. Grant that the Spirit of God may thus be with us.

We thank thee for the hope of those who have gone before. How many dear little children of ours are with their Saviour and with God. Our parents rest from their labors, and rejoice in their saintly habitations. How many companions of ours walk no more weeping, no more sick, no more suffering! How full has heaven become of those who are precious to us! And, Lord, we are coming, sometimes

lingering, sometimes losing our way, but drawn by a thousand memories of love, drawn by the inspiration of God, drawn by the power which controls the universe; and grant that we may so come that thou shalt not be ashamed of us. So may we come that there shall be many flocking to witness our entrance, to rejoice in us and with us, and to lift us into the presence of the Divine. Then, in the very hour of our attainment and triumph, what crowns and laurels we have we will cast at thy feet, O blessed Jesus Christ, Master, Model, Saviour, Lord, saying, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praise and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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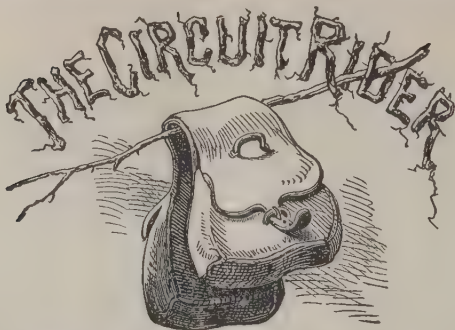
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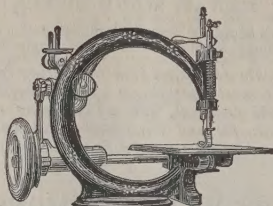
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